

be a few days after the seedlings have emerged. Seedlings that begin to look yellow and thin are associated with needs for fertilizer. The first application of fertilizer should be applied at half-strength of the manufacturer's recommendation. Depending on the fertilizer used, about 1-2 teaspoons per gallon of water applied once every two weeks should be adequate. If seedling growth is too fast and large, growth can be slowed by watering less often.

The plants should be "hardened-off" before setting them into the garden. "Hardening-off" is the process whereby plant tissues are toughened to withstand the outside environment. This should be done over a two-week period. Harden the plants by setting them outside

in partial shade to receive lower temperatures during the day and bringing them in at night. The transplants should be left outside longer each day during the hardening-off period. Take precautions so transplants are not killed by frost.

When purchasing vegetable transplants, the best are not necessarily the largest and tallest available. For example, tomato plants which have flowers should be avoided since the flower's presence indicates the plant's growing under stress. Generally, good quality transplants can be selected by their stocky, healthy appearance, medium-size, deep green color, and freedom from insects and diseases.

Table 1. TEMPERATURES AND TIMES REQUIRED FOR GROWING PLANTS FOR TRANSPLANTING INTO THE GARDEN₁

VEGETABLE	DAY ₂ (°F)	NIGHT (°F)	TIME (WEEKS)
ASPARAGUS	70 – 80	65 – 70	8 – 10
BROCCOLI	60 – 70	50 – 60	5 – 7
BRUSSELS SPROUTS	60 – 70	50 – 60	5 – 7
CABBAGE	60 – 70	50 – 60	5 – 7
CAULIFLOWER	60 – 70	50 – 60	5 – 7
SWEET CORN	70 – 75	60 – 65	3 – 4
CUCUMBER	70 – 75	60 – 65	3 – 4
EGGPLANT	70 – 80	65 – 70	6 – 8
LETTUCE	55 – 65	50 – 55	5 – 7
MUSKMELON	70 – 75	60 – 65	3 – 4
ONION	60 – 65	55 – 60	10 – 12
PEPPER	65 – 75	60 – 65	6 – 8
SUMMER SQUASH	70 – 75	60 – 65	3 – 4
TOMATO	65 – 75	60 – 65	5 – 7
WATERMELON	70 – 80	65 – 70	3 – 4

₁The above table was taken from Knott's Handbook for Vegetable Growers.

₂Select the lower temperature on cloudy days.